

IN THE CLAIMS

1. (Previously presented) A method of making a nonwoven web, the method comprising:

- a) providing a plurality of fibers;
- b) subjecting the fibers to a pneumatic attenuation force in a drawing slot, the attenuation force imparting a velocity to the fibers;
- c) reducing the velocity of the fibers in a diffusion chamber that is spaced from an exit of the drawing slot in a direction of travel of the plurality of fibers, the diffusion chamber being formed substantially between opposed diverging sidewalls;
- d) subjecting the fibers to an applied electrostatic charge before the fibers enter the diffusion chamber, wherein the electrostatic charge is applied by two or more oppositely directed electrostatic charging units with each charging unit including an emitter device and a target device such that at least one emitter device is configured on each side of the fibers so that an electrostatic charge is generated from opposite directions transverse to the direction of travel of the plurality of fibers; and thereafter
- e) collecting the fibers into a web on a moving forming surface.

2. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 1 wherein the electrostatic charging units are in a staggered configuration.

3. (Original) The method of Claim 1 wherein the opposed diverging sidewalls are unvented.

4. (Original) The method of Claim 1 wherein the pneumatic attenuation force is provided by perturbed attenuation air.

5. (Original) The method of Claim 1 wherein at least one of the opposed diverging sidewalls comprises at least one vortex generator.

6. (Withdrawn) An apparatus for forming a nonwoven web comprising:

- a) a source of fibers;
- b) a fiber drawing slot formed between opposed slot sidewalls;
- c) a diffusion chamber formed substantially between opposed diverging sidewalls, the diffusion chamber located below the drawing slot;
- d) two or more oppositely directed electrostatic charging units located above the diffusion chamber; and
- e) a forming surface for collecting the fibers as a nonwoven web.

7. (Withdrawn) The apparatus of Claim 6 wherein at least one electrostatic charging unit is located substantially closer to the diffusion chamber than at least one other electrostatic charging unit.

8. (Withdrawn) The apparatus of Claim 6 wherein the opposed diverging sidewalls are unvented.

9. (Withdrawn) The apparatus of Claim 6 further comprising a means for providing perturbed attenuating air to the drawing slot.

10. (Withdrawn) The apparatus of Claim 6 wherein at least one of the opposed diverging sidewalls comprises at least one vortex generator.

11. (Currently amended) A method of making a nonwoven web, the method comprising:

- a) providing a plurality of fibers;
- b) subjecting the fibers to a pneumatic attenuation force in a drawing slot, the attenuation force imparting a velocity to the fibers;
- c) reducing the velocity of the fibers in a diffusion chamber, the diffusion chamber being formed substantially between opposed diverging sidewalls;
- d) subjecting the fibers to and charging the fibers with an applied electrostatic charge while the fibers are in the diffusion chamber, the electrostatic charge being applied by two or more oppositely directed electrostatic charging units wherein at least one electrostatic charging unit includes an emitter device located upon [[each]] a first one of the diverging sidewalls and a target device located on the opposite diverging wall and a second electrostatic charging unit includes a target device on the first one of the diverging sidewalls and an emitter device on the opposite diverging sidewall so that electrostatic charge is generated from opposite directions between the diverging sidewalls with respect to the direction of travel of the plurality of fibers through the diversion chamber; and thereafter
- e) collecting the fibers into a web on a moving forming surface.

12. (Canceled)

13. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 11 wherein at least one electrostatic charging unit is located substantially closer to the drawing slot than at least one other electrostatic charging unit.

14. (Original) The method of Claim 11 wherein the pneumatic attenuation force is provided by perturbed attenuation air.

15. (Previously Presented) The method of Claim 11 wherein the opposed diverging sidewalls are unvented.

16. (Original) The method of Claim 11 wherein at least one of the opposed diverging sidewalls comprises at least one vortex generator.

17. (Withdrawn) An apparatus for forming a nonwoven web comprising:

- a) a source of fibers;
- b) a fiber drawing slot formed between opposed slot sidewalls;
- c) a diffusion chamber formed substantially between opposed diverging sidewalls, the diffusion chamber located below the drawing slot;
- d) at least one electrostatic charging unit located upon one of the diverging sidewalls of the diffusion chamber; and
- e) a forming surface for collecting the fibers as a nonwoven web.

18. (Withdrawn) The apparatus of Claim 17 wherein the opposed diverging sidewalls are unvented.

19. (Withdrawn) The apparatus of Claim 17 comprising two or more oppositely directed electrostatic charging units, wherein at least one electrostatic charging unit is located upon each of the diverging sidewalls.

20. (Withdrawn) The apparatus of Claim 19 wherein at least one electrostatic charging unit is located substantially closer to the drawing slot than at least one other electrostatic charging unit.

21. (Withdrawn) The apparatus of Claim 17 further comprising a means for providing perturbed attenuating air to the drawing slot.

22. (Withdrawn) The apparatus of Claim 17 wherein at least one of the opposed diverging sidewalls comprises at least one vortex generator.

23. (Previously presented) A method of making a nonwoven web, the method comprising:

- a) providing a plurality of fibers;
- b) subjecting the fibers to a pneumatic attenuation force in a drawing slot formed between opposed drawing slot sidewalls, the attenuation force imparting a velocity to the fibers;
- c) subjecting the fibers to an applied electrostatic charge, the electrostatic charge applied by an electrostatic charging unit located on one of the drawing slot sidewalls;
- d) reducing the velocity of the fibers in a diffusion chamber, the diffusion chamber being formed substantially between opposed diverging sidewalls; and thereafter
- e) collecting the fibers into a web on a moving forming surface;

wherein the pneumatic attenuation force is provided by air consisting of attenuation air only entering the drawing slot from the drawing slot sidewall opposing the drawing slot sidewall upon which the electrostatic charging unit is located.